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THE DEATH OF MENANDER

BY WILLIAM SCOTT FERGUSON

The excellent article of Dr. Clark in *Classical Philology* I, pp. 313 ff., has convinced me that the archonship of Philippos, and hence the death of Menander, do really belong to 292/1 B. C. His proof, which is grounded on the sound maxim that the birth-years of celebrities were often ascertained in antiquity by calculation, while the years of their death rested upon contemporary records, starts with the pretty demonstration that Menander and Epicurus became ephebes, the former in 325/4, the latter in 324/3. Dr. Clark is thus enabled to maintain the report of Strabo that the philosopher and the comedian were *συνέφηβοι*, while he discards the false combination that, for this reason, they were both born in 342/1. 342/1 was the well-established birth-year of Epicurus; the birth-year of Menander, on the other hand, was 343/2, and since he lived 52 years his death occurred in 292/1, or, as is otherwise recorded, in the thirty-second year of Ptolemy Soter's reign (323/2-285).

There are still some weak places in this argument, but it is doubtless the best solution of the problem thus far reached,¹ and it is not invalidated by Wilhelm's new doctrine of the *βασιλεία* (*Urk.*, pp. 215 ff.), or by his redating of *IG. II 2. 975 f. (ibid., pp. 63 ff.)*. In my *Priests of Asklepios* (p. 150) I rashly affirmed that the location of Philippos in 293/2 was now beyond doubt. This I should like to emend. What I should have said is that the sequence Philippos-Kimon is indubitable; for that the words used to characterize the activity of Phaidros, hoplite-general in Kimon's year (*καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐλευθέραν καὶ δημοκρατουμένην αὐτόνομον παρέδωκεν καὶ τοὺς νόμους κυρίους τοῖς μεθ' ἑαυτόν* *IG. II 331*), presuppose the presence in the city of the oligarchic leaders,

¹Wilhelm *Urkunden dramatischer Aufführungen*, pp. 249 f., uses the same arguments as Clark, but he is apparently afraid of the logical conclusion. Menander, he says, "Konnte als Mann von (freilich noch nicht erreichten) 52 Jahren bezeichnet werden" in the end of 293/2. In other words he was 52 in 292/1.

exiled in 307/6 and recalled in Philippos' archonship, should be manifest to anyone who has studied the party struggles of Athens at this period. Beloch, indeed, asserts the contrary (*Griech. Gesch.* III 2, p. 36). But apart from the improbability of a dangerous revolutionary activity being displayed by a small band of dispersed and discredited exiles, we have the authority of Philochoros, who states expressly that no constitutional crisis preceded the return of the oligarchs.¹ On the other hand, if the danger referred to in the decree was the disposition of Demetrius to re-establish the exiles, Phaidros could have had no share as hoplite-general in averting it, since the pleasure of the king was not revealed till the year of Philippos. At its beginning it lay in the province of prophecy to foretell the recall of the oligarchs.²

It may accordingly be taken as demonstrated that Philippos preceded Kimon directly. But so far as this *datum* is concerned, Philippos-Kimon may be placed in either 293/2–292/1 or 292/1–291/0.

Phaidros, however, as hoplite-general in Kimon's year, *περιστάντων τει πόλει καιρῶν δυσκόλων διεφύλαξεν τὴν εἰρήνην τῆι χώραι, ἀποφαινόμενος ἀεὶ τὰ κράτιστα, καὶ τὸν σῖτον ἐκ τῆς χώρας καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους καρποὺς αἴτιος ἐγένετο εἰσκομισθῆναι, συμβουλεύσας τῷ δῆμῳ συντελέσαι . . .* (erasure of about 38 letters because of some reference to Demetrius). The country was thus in danger, but the threatened invasion did not ensue, and the crops were harvested in safety. The attack was expected in harvest time, that is, in March–April of 291 or 290. This peril of Attica can be brought into connection with two events only—with the second revolt of Boeotia, and the appearance of the Aetolians on the frontier. The first of these occurrences is not dated strictly, but from the general account of Plutarch (*Demetrius* 39 f.) it is possible, indeed, that the siege of Thebes lasted as late as March–April 291, but it is improbable that the prospects of the revolters were at that time so good that the democrats in Athens were

¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Reiske), p. 637.

² *Ibid.*, *τοῦ δ' ἐνιαύτου τοῦδε διελθόντος, ἐτέρου δ' εἰσιόντος*. Then follows the omen of a dog on the Acropolis, and its application by the seer, Philochoros himself, to the recall of the exiles. The annalistic arrangement of Philochoros' *Ἄτθος* makes it clear that we have to do with the beginning of the year in which the main incident occurred.

tempted to secede also, or that it was feasible for the Boeotians or Aetolians to break through the Macedonian lines and menace Attica in their rear. Still, this contingency cannot be excluded altogether. On the other hand, the Aetolians hung upon the Attic frontier in the early half of 290. This we know from the celebrated *Ithyphallos*, sung when Demetrius came to Athens later on, in Boedromion (September) of this same year.¹ His point of departure on this occasion was Corcyra, where he had been dallying with Lanassa, Pyrrhus' runaway wife, instead of attending to his proper business. The Aetolians took the opportunity of his absence to plunder his possessions far and near. They even seized the Delphic sanctuary (290/89, i. e., before Boedromion, *IG. II* 309). The Athenians were obliged to fight in their own defense. Hence the appeal made to the king in the *Ithyphallos* to take the Aetolians in hand himself.

Another course was open to Athens in this emergency. It might have joined the Aetolians and Pyrrhus, and thus have taken sides against its overlord, and this was, in fact, what the people wished to do; but a revolt at this time would have been most unwise, as the events of the next few months showed. Hence Phaidros took credit to himself at a later date, not for preventing the revolt—he was too shrewd a man to jeopardize the honors he was soliciting by appearing as the opponent of so desirable an issue—but for forestalling its consequences. Secession, he claimed, and with good reason, would have resulted in Demetrius' taking the control of affairs from the democrats and giving it to the extreme oligarchs, who, embittered by a long exile, would have instituted a reign of terror in the city. The temptation to break away from Demetrius was at this time all the greater in that, in the very last days of Phaidros' generalship (supposing Kimon to have been archon in 291/0), or in the very first week of that of his successor, a Ptolemaic fleet under the command of Zenon appeared in Attic waters. It conveyed a gift of corn to Athens,

¹ Athenaeus vi. 253 c. The last doubt as to the connection of the *Ithyphallos* with the coming of Demetrius to Athens in September of 290 has been set aside by the recent discovery of Bourguet (*L'administration financière du sanctuaire pythique au iv^e siècle avant J.C.*, pp. 141 ff.; cf. Pomtow *Klio* VI, pp. 92 f.) that the Pythia, which the king celebrated in Athens after his arrival, came in October, not in August.

doubtless from Philadelphus, though significantly enough its donor is not named in the Athenian decree from which we learn of the incident (*IG. II 5. 309b*). Zenon was probably commissioned to incite sedition in Athens, but, as we have seen, Phaidros and other moderates induced the Athenians to wait.

In summary it must be reiterated that, while the evidence thus far presented favors 291/0 for Kimon, nothing decisive has been made out.

No one knew better than Phaidros the state of Philadelphus' preparations for a war with Demetrius, since he had been in Alexandria in one of the years between 296/5 and Kimon's archonship. This we learn from the following passage of *IG. II. 331*:

καὶ ἐπὶ Νικίου μὲν ἄρχοντος στρατηγὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ δῆμου χειροτονηθεὶς ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευὴν δις πάντων ὡμ προσῆκεν ἐπεμελῆθη καλῶς καὶ φιλοτίμως· καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν χειροτονηθεὶς πλεονάκις καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔνους γενόμενος τρὶς τὴν πᾶσαν ἐποίησατο σπουδὴν ὅπως ἀν οἱ στρατιῶται ὡς ἄριστα κατ(ε)σκευασμένοι παρέχωνται τὰς χρείας τῷ δῆμῳ· πρεσβεύσας δὲ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τὸν πρεσβύτερον Πτολεμαῖον ἐκόμισεν τῷ δῆμῳ σῖτον καὶ χρήματα· χειροτονηθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ δῆμου ἐπὶ τὰ ὅπλα στρατηγὸς τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν τὸν ἐπὶ Κίμωνος ἄρχοντος διετέλεσεν, κτλ.

The space within which the embassy took place is thus sharply defined. It was not in Nikias' year (296/5): it was not in Kimon's year (291/0 at the latest): it was, therefore, in one of the four (or three) intervening years. However, it is noteworthy that in the same interval Phaidros held the generalship *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* several times and had charge of the mercenaries three times. Struck by this seeming impossibility, I suggested (*Klio* V, p. 161), that *πλεονάκις* carried us back of 296/5, and Beloch (*Griech. Gesch.* III. 2, p. 377) concluded that the order of events was disregarded in that the embassy to Egypt belonged four years later than 291/0. This was, beyond doubt, harsh treatment of the text; for elsewhere in the document the chronological sequence is strictly adhered to, and it can, I think, be shown now that both of us were wrong. For to my contention the objection is fatal that Phaidros must then have held the generalship *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* before that *ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευὴν*, or the praetorship before the aedileship. But this is unprecedented and quite unlikely; for the former office involved serious military duties, while the latter, so far

as we can judge, was a purely civil post. Against Beloch, on the other hand, it can be urged that it is clear from *IG. II 5. 309b* that Athens had already opened negotiations with Egypt in 291/0 or earlier. Hence if the embassy of Phaidros is taken out of its context in *IG. II. 331* (295/4–292/1), and placed later than his chief generalship, we are obliged to replace it by another quite similar embassy. In other words the embassy of Phaidros is needed before 290/89 to explain the relations existent between Egypt and Athens on the eleventh of Hekatombaion of that year. It would be equally erroneous to date any of Phaidros' generalships *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* after 291/0; for in that year, at the latest, he was commander-in-chief, and had thus reached the summit of his military career. Subsequently he held no lower military office.

We conclude then, that, since Phaidros was general *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* several times and commandant of the mercenaries thrice in the four (or three) years between 296/5 and Kimon's archonship, he must have held these offices simultaneously. On the other hand, we contend that from the moment it is shown that the generalship *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* and the command of the mercenaries could be, and were regularly, held at the same time, it becomes unnecessary, nay inconsequential, to demand seven or eight years for the tenure of the one office *πλεονάκις* (not *πολλάκις*, observe) and of the other *τρίς*. My interpretation of the passage is, therefore, this: the people elected ten generals annually, among them one *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν*. Upon the meeting of the new board the specific district of each was determined, the constitutional definitions being, of course, observed in the process. Thus Phaidros was elected *στρατηγὸς* *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* for four years in succession (295/4–292/1) (*καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν χειροτονηθεὶς πλεονάκις*), and he was put in charge of the mercenaries three times (*καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ξένους γενόμενος τρίς*). In this dual capacity he exerted himself stoutly that the mercenaries should be properly equipped and do their duty (*τὴν πᾶσαν ἐποίσατο σπουδὴν ὅπως ἀν οἱ στρατιῶται ὡς ἄριστα κατ(ε)σκευασμένοι παρέχωνται τὰς χρείας τῷ δῆμῳ*). On the other occasion in which he was “home-general” he went to Egypt. There is, indeed, an ambiguity in the words *now*, but there was

none for an Athenian of 275 b. c. The institutional facts, as will be seen in a moment, precluded such a possibility.

In support of this view, which the language allows, but does not prescribe, the following reasons can be urged: (1) Otherwise, Phaidros mentions nothing that he did as general *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* notwithstanding that he had held this office repeatedly. Such modesty is quite without parallel in this document, and is altogether unusual in decrees of this sort. (2) It is clear that a distinction is drawn in the inscription between *χειροτονηθείς* and *γενόμενος*—the first being used of election to a magistracy, the second of assumption of a particular command. The author had no stylistic feeling against the repetition of *χειροτονηθείς* seeing that he used it again and again in consecutive sentences. (3) The general *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* was regularly in charge of the mercenary troops, the several detachments being delegated to professional *ῆγέμονες*. (4) There could have been no general *ἐπὶ τοὺς ξένους*, since the mercenaries were technically, not *ξένοι*, but *στρατιῶται*; nor is the title *στρατηγὸς* *ἐπὶ τοὺς ξένους* ever found in the Athenian inscriptions, though scores of them are extant dealing with resolutions, dedications, etc., of the mercenaries.¹

It may be objected that, if the generalship *ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν* regularly involved the command of the mercenaries, it was unnecessary to mention the assignment of Phaidros to this duty. But there were other functions which might have been delegated to him, and he was, in fact, intrusted with a different charge on one of his several “home-generalships.”² When he was absent in Egypt some one of the “reserve” generals had, of course, to be put in control of the mercenaries. Moreover, should the war be beyond the frontier of Athens, the mercenaries, like all the other

¹ The *data* for these last two observations will be found in a work on *Hellenistic Athens* to be published shortly.

² The *μέν* of the phrase *ἐπὶ Νικίου μὲν ἄρχοντος* (see above, p. 308) holds the military commands together. The *δέ* of *πρεσβεύσας δέ* simply contrasts with these the duties of an ambassador: it need not divide the embassy from the generalships in point of time; but, should anyone think this to be the case, he may place the embassy in 292/1 and the mercenary commands in the three preceding years. In fact, this was probably the way in which they were distributed, and the opening of negotiations with Egypt was doubtless connected directly with the return of the oligarchic exiles in the archonship of Philippos (292/1).

active troops, passed regularly over to the conduct of the hoplite-general. The addition *καὶ γενόμενος ἐπὶ τοὺς ξένους τρίς* thus adds the idea of home (not foreign) service, and hence, of domestic danger on three occasions between 296/5 and 291/0.

πλεονάκις accordingly equals *τετράκις*. The word implied more than the numeral adverb, and hence was preferred. It could not equal *τρίς*, as would be necessary if Kimon were archon in 292/1; not simply in that “three times” and “several times” are hardly equivalent, but in that, one year being given to the Egyptian embassy, two alone would remain for service with the mercenaries. Hence we conclude that Kimon was archon in 291/0 and Philippos his immediate predecessor in 292/1.

We have thus reached the conclusion from epigraphical and historical considerations to which Clark has come from examining the biographical *data*, namely that Menander died in 292/1, in the archonship of Philippos. This involves an important inference—not simply that there is an omission of a name before Philippos in the archon-list given by Dionysius of Halicarnassus *De Dinarch.* 9 (Reiske, pp. 647 ff.), but that the name which has fallen out is Charinos; for this archon manifestly preceded 289/8 by a short interval.¹ 292/1–290/89 being occupied by Philippos, Kimon, and Diokles, and there being no vacancy prior to 295/4, he can belong only to 294/3 or 293/2. The first of these years, however, must be assigned to Olympiodoros. The year of the re-establishment of democratic institutions had to be given to this distinguished liberal; and, moreover, the solitary decree (*IG.* II 302) of Olympiodoros’ archonship betrays restoration politics. Hence Charinos and the gap in Dionysius belong together in 293/2.

Dionysius professes to lay before us the names of seventy archons, Nikophemos in 361/0 being the first. He divides them into four groups, the first ending with Pythodelos in 336/5, the second with Philokles in 322/1, the third of fifteen years with Anaxikrates in 307/6, and the fourth likewise of fifteen years with Philippos in 292/1.² It thus resulted that Kairimos (308/7)

¹ *Priests of Asklepios*, p. 150.

² That the first period of fifteen years began with Philokles in 322/1 is clear from both the text and the archon-table of Dionysius; that the second began with 307/6 is explicitly stated twice. Dionysius, doubtless, had as many names between 307/6 and

was all but last in the third group, and Charinos (293/2) all but last in the fourth group. Dionysius, moreover, was accurate in distinguishing between the names of these two archons, but his contemporaries were not equally careful; for in Diodoros (xx. 37) the archon for 308/7 is named Charinos. That is to say, another list of Athenian archons used in Roman times had Charinos twice, once erroneously in 308/7, as we have learned from the new fragment of the Parian Chronicle,¹ and once correctly in 293/2.² We thus come very near an explanation of the omission of Charinos in Dionysius' list. How it entered into the head of an editor (a scribe was hardly culpable) to retain Kairimos in 308/7 and abandon Charinos in 293/2, it is impossible to demonstrate, but easy to imagine. He may have found a marginal note defending Kairimos and rejecting Charinos in the second last place in the third group, and, acting upon the misapprehension that the protest was against the only Charinos he could find in his author's list, he may have struck out the archon-name for 293/2—the second last year of the fourth group.

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Philippos as he had between 322/1 and 307/6, i. e., 14. But as the list stands in our manuscripts there are but thirteen in the former place. Consequently one has fallen out. The only escape from this conclusion requires the assumption of two errors on Dionysius' part, first in giving 69 names while professing to give 70, and secondly in writing a 15 where he should have written 14.

¹ Wilhelm and Krispi *Ath. Mitt.* 1897, pp. 183 ff. and especially p. 209.

² Usener *Epicurea*, pp. 132 f.; Seneca *Epist.* ii. 6. 9=18. 9.